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ABSTRACT

This report describes the ways in which the Center for Minority Achievement works to reform public education for early adolescents in six New York City schools. It consists of edited conversations among the three central staff members of the program and vignettes and quotes from a school student and from staff affected by the program. These conversations and quotes provide information about the methods that the Center used to promote minority student education and the results of the program. The impact of the program can be seen through a range of projects which include the following; (1) reorganization; (2) mentoring administrators; (3) staff development in schools; (4) a computer club; (5) word processing for parents; (6) brokering tutorial activities with corporate and collegiate volunteers; and (7) involving teachers and students with Bank Street College's Tiorati Environmental Center. Two appendixes are included. Appendix A contains a list of which aspects of the project work for the Center for Minority Achievement; Appendix B contains a brief catalogue of the Center for Minority Achievement's services and activities. (JS)

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THE CENTER FOR MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT

An Early Adolescent Program

Written and Edited by

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1989

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Dr. Lucy Burrows, Dean of Bank Street College's Graduate School, who believed in the Center's program and funded it for the first year. We also dedicate the book to Dr. Y. Nona Weekes, Chairperson of the Educational Leadership department, who from its inception gave the Center guidance and moral support.

THANKS

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for Minority Achievement was begun in two intermediate and junior high schools in 1985 and is now operating in six schools in three school districts in New York City. The six schools are typical of urban schools in large metropolitan areas everywhere. The program uses three Bank Street College faculty members working part-time with the on-call assistance of other professors from the College and from other professionals from appropriate outside agencies and disciplines.

Altogether more than 1,000 children and 30 staff members are directly affected by our work. The diversity and scope of the program activities make it difficult to identify a precise number of students and teachers affected, but the program has great impact through the range of projects which include reorganization in two schools, mentoring administrators, staff development in schools, a computer club, word processing for parents, brokering tutorial activities with corporate and collegiate volunteers, and involving teachers and students with Bank Street College's Tiorati Environmental Center near Bear Mountain, New York.

This book was written to describe the ways in which we work in the Center for Minority Achievement. This book consists of edited conversations among the three central Center for Minority Achievement staff members and vignettes and quotes from a school student and from staff whom our programs have reached.

In the staff conversations,

LM = Lorraine Monroe

LG = Lonnetta Gaines

MC = Marvin Cohen

We used the informal structure of conversations to allow readers to hear our voices as we talked about our experiences. We chose to use vignettes from persons in the program because they speak powerfully about our efforts and successes.

The four basic premises of the program are

1. that the most effective and long-lasting reform must be site-specific,
2. that effective reform cannot be imposed but requires collaborative and collegial work based on mutual trust built up over time,
3. that dropout prevention begins before high school and cannot be effectively done as an "isolated one or two hit project,"
4. that dropout prevention consists of everything that is done with administration, staff, students, and parents to enrich the professional and educational experiences of all persons in the schools.

We believe that public educational reform is very possible -- difficult and challenging but possible, exciting, and vitally essential in order to transform our lives and the lives of children. We hope others will be able to draw insight from our experiences and thus be able to organize their own site-specific programs. We wish you well in this endeavor.

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LM: Okay, let's begin by talking about the kind of work we're doing in the Center for Minority Achievement (CMA) and the Stay in School Partnership Program (SSPP) and the things we're doing with teachers and pupils and administrators that seem to be working and telling why these things work. Maybe I can start off by saying that one of the things I found profound is taking the principals and assistant principals through the process of observation by doing dual observations, doing post-observation conferences with them, and helping them to focus on the kinds of things they should be seeing and what they should be doing about what they are seeing, and helping them understand that the observation process and post-observation activities are crucial to making education happen for children. Observation is a skill that is not usually taught with great specificity in colleges and many people come into the system not knowing how important the observation process is to the improvement of schooling. We see this kind of assistance to administrators working because teacher behavior begins to change and instruction changes for children when the principal and their assistants become the real instructional leaders through the observation process. One first-year principal did not see himself at all as needing any help; he wanted us to help his staff. However, when we came back the second year, he said "I want you to help me". This is a big growth for a principal to indicate that he needs help. So we sat and mapped out a plan. There were several sessions with his cabinet, and talking through some problems of administration. He asked for a session for his entire staff on appropriate questioning techniques because I had told him during his initial classroom visits that he needed to select from his observations the kinds of things he saw as pervasive needs across the

school. The one he discovered was that teachers did not know how to ask appropriate questions to get students to think and talk. But another helping part came... it's interesting because these projects always start out big and efficacy comes when assistance comes closer to the doers. Finally there was one acting assistant principal who was having difficulty amalgamating her department. There were lots of uncooperative people in the department and the principal said "Would you sit with her and talk about ways in which she can bring the department together." Again, it's what do the staffs need. So we sat and we talked and I had her give me descriptions of these people who were not interested in working cooperatively. Essentially I did the same things you do with children. If the child isn't working cooperatively, you try to figure out in what area the person or the kid is an ace or expert, and you allow the child to shine in that particular area; so I said to her, "How many congratulatory notes are you writing to these people about things they're doing well?" She said, "Well, I haven't had time to write notes to them at all." And I said, "Why don't you take time and start. They don't have to be big formal letters. They can just be thanks for cooperating with..., or that was a great bulletin board, or I was pleased when I went by your room..." She said, "Well, what to do with the hardcore people?" And I said, "It's the same with kids. With hardcore staff, after you have done all the nice guy stuff, it's hard ball time." But it didn't have to come to that because what I advised her to do is to find a project to which everybody could contribute his or her strength and talents, so that meeting times could be used to figure out how to make the project good for the whole school instead of spending time griping about what isn't going well. It happened that a science fair was coming up and I said "Use that as the amalgamating activity." So work

became not about ego but about how we've got to pull off a great science fair because this is our particular sub-school's project, and I want to contribute to its success. Later she told me that she was surprised at how the notes of congratulations, the notes of praise, really worked, and that when she listened to people's personal stories, she didn't excuse them, the same way you don't excuse children for not performing because of personal difficulties. She listened very sympathetically and then said, "And now go do the work." Work is therapy. She practiced this with staff. I went back after our two interviews with a list of things to try. The science fair was a great success. Everyone worked wonderfully, even the recalcitrant hardcore.

List of 10 Things to Try

1. Talk to each department member individually but mention a common theme, i.e., working together for the students, that will be the focus of whole department meetings.
2. Take a tough line with non-negotiable beliefs, i.e., we are here for the students.
3. Analyze, through keen observation, the strengths and weaknesses of each staff person and use the strengths.
4. Discuss the strengths and the ways in which the strength can be used to be effective for students.
5. Discuss the weakness and make a plan for training to change the weakness.
6. Observe and follow-up until change occurs.

7. Build up a sense of pride and mission that the science sub-school is going to be the best sub-school.
8. Write lots of notes and letters of thanks and congratulations.
9. Pick off the fence sitters, new people, and non-hardcore staff with assistance, praise, notes, and tasks that play to their strengths.
10. As soon as the Successful Project is finished, celebrate, evaluate and begin to plan for the next Big Project.

This is one of the things that I am doing that I can see that works. Something else that we learned. Education works well when you have strong, visionary, action-oriented leadership, and where leadership is not strong, education can work where the leadership at least lets the strong people move ahead for kids.

MC: I was going to say, school works best when the leaders have a vision.

LM: Oh, definitely. Oh, definitely.

MC: But the principal doesn't have to be the leader. He has to have the sense to let the other leaders lead.

LM: Yes. To release doers and to be secure enough that he or she is not threatened when other people start the ball rolling.

MC: Right.

LM: Leaders need to understand that the released people's work makes him or her look good. In some schools where we're working, there is quiet non-principal leadership and spectacular followers.

MC: Absolutely. I think it relates to a thing that works very well with teachers for me, modeling, and that makes my separation of teachers and kids very difficult because I work with teachers in order to let them see an alternative way to teach. I broaden their cultural frame. It is more easily understood as letting teachers see new ways to say and do things. They then see that the kids that they have in front of them can do things that they never expected that they could do, and that when they are not able to do the things that we ask them to do, that this can become a diagnostic experience for the teacher. The teacher can then understand what they together need to work on. A specific example was an activity that demands kids make the numbers from 1 to 10 using four 4's, which is interesting because they have to know their basic number facts and they have to know order of operations. The activity gives me the opportunity to break the children into random groups of four to work cooperatively on a problem. In a classroom where the teacher has previously worked with the order of operations, the kids can help each other review. In a class that has no experience with the topic, they can invent strategies and the teacher can listen to the children in order to plan instruction. A whole group discussion follows where I model "teacher as recorder" of children's strategies and move the children to the traditional rules. Instead of the teacher telling, the teacher sees how children can be engaged in developing their own algorithms.

LG: In my work this year, there have been two instances with teachers where there has been some nice reinforcement. I've been going in alot of classroom workshops with Imagine Success in order to help students build the underlying personal skills that feed into academic success. We've used reading and writing skills so that the young people and the teachers themselves could see some direct school-related results of these Imagine Success personal skills workshops. Ms. Fogle at School A was inspired by some of the written material used in the Imagine Success workshops. She has developed an afterschool workshop called "WIT," Writing is Terrific. She has selected a group of 7th grade students, some of whom worked with CMA last year, and has brought them together with students from her sixth grade class and is doing work to help them to increase and improve their goal orientation while improving their writing skills.

Vignette - Ms. M. Fogle

Hopes

The project "Imagine Success" has to do with developing basic personal skills and improving reading, writing and communication techniques. I expected that academic achievement would be enhanced. This would come about because each child would feel so good about him or herself. We chant, "The more we practice, the better we get!" at the beginning of each lesson. Through the Imagine Success program the students feel so good about themselves that they come to believe that there is nothing that they can't accomplish. Personally, the outcomes of my expectations of this program are very positive.

LG: One thing that began to happen as I began to work to make a transition between myself as demonstration teacher and myself as staff developer was a request from one teacher for more materials; I felt that what would be helpful was not more materials but rather an example of how to dig more deeply into existing materials. So in answer to that request I brought in a one-page article from the New Yorker magazine and a listing of curriculum options for using all the things that can happen with just that one page. Recently, I've noticed that teachers have been utilizing a daily newspaper as a source for activities and questions. Perhaps these lessons were inspired by the example of the work done with the one page from the New Yorker Magazine.

Imagine Success has had some effect, I think, mostly as an energizer with teachers. Imagine Success is based upon the following premises:

1. What you think has a profound impact upon your experiences.
2. Successful living is vitally connected to effective learning.
3. Success is related to ongoing self-development.

The Imagine Success Manual contains ideas and exercises that will help the student to review these premises and implement them in his/her thinking and behavior. The Imagine Success manual is an organized collection of journal activities and action charts which can help individuals and groups to set goals and achieve them. The students have been coming into a stronger, more powerful sense of themselves largely through the cultural exercises. We participated in the Aaron Davis Hall International Series. We brought a wonderful group, Forces of Nature, to dance at one school. All of the Imagine Success classes also visited Bank Street College to hear a South African poet, Duma Ndoluvu; the students' responses were great.

Andi Owens, creator of Genesis II Museum of International Black Culture, created a mini-museum for the Imagine Success work experience orientation project. He developed a Black history portfolio and he made a poster which displays photographic images of prominent figures in African history along with photographs of the students. The theme was "Put Yourself into Our History." The work with the students directly has been the core of the work for me this year and there has been some meaningful spillover with the teachers as well.

LM: I think that idea of spillover I see as growth in working with the principals in the observation process. Initially the comments that they would have about what they had seen during observations were always peripheral comments, i.e., about either how quiet the children were, or how neat the room was, or what the bulletin boards looked like, and there was little attention to whether learning was taking place, or whether there were real learning outcomes by the end of the period. It took me at least 8 visits with 3 administrators in one school before I could get them to talk seriously about "Did the children learn anything at the end of the period, and, if so, how do you know that they learned from what you observed?" It was after the 7th observation with the 3 of them that I sat back and asked no questions and gave no comments. Usually the procedure was we would observe, then we'd go into a room and all of us would talk about what we had seen. I never spoke first, I'd say to each of them, "Well, what did you see?" And then I'd have to argue with them when it was a poor lesson and they'd comment about how quiet the children were, or that all of the children had books. At the 7th session, they finally were able to discuss and debate with each other whether the children had learned

something and state that they knew it by these activities, and these questions and these behaviors. Then they turned to me and said, "Did we do all right? We've got it now, right?" and I said "Yes." But that took 8 times of going with them and really badgering them about what to look for because my belief is if the children don't know something at the end of the period that they didn't know in the beginning of the period, then the lesson was not successful or satisfactory, no matter how quiet the children were and how nice the bulletin boards were and how neatly the books on the shelves were lined up. That was a real growth experience for them to come to that, and I felt that I could then allow them to go off on their own because they had now learned what to look for and also how to talk to teachers about what they'd seen in order to help them to be better. I emphasized that they had to go back, and to keep going back to observe and help teachers. It was about training and honing their own skills and going back again and again to see whether the teachers were improving their skills. That was very powerful and in fact one not so new administrator said to me, "Now I know why the observation process is so important."

LG: It is this kind of basic in-house work with the actual people who are with the children day in and day out that is at the crux of making something happen and making change happen.

LM: Exactly. Exactly.

MC: I think that an interesting learning outcome for us of this way of modeling lessons and behaviors and working with the children, teachers,

and administrators is that we found that overwhelmingly the people want to learn to do new things.

LM: I agree.

MC: They want to have some other ways to do their work. They don't want to just keep repeating the same things louder and slower. They don't want to just adjust the shades or keep the room neat and tidy. In fact they find it more stimulating for themselves to have additional skills and techniques -- just as Bartle quickly implemented new suggestions for substance. What I think is interesting is to think about the difference in the kinds of change that happens which depend on the teacher's level of experience. I work with one teacher who is an outstanding teacher at School A. Well, actually it is a pair of teachers who are outstanding teachers. Their level of observation is very sophisticated. It's fun to work with them because they're so excited to know more and to become still finer teachers.

LM: Finer because of the work that you've been doing?

MC: Finer in observing me and using their own skills to integrate what I do into their repertoire. Finer in observing me do a demonstration lesson to the point where they notice things that other teachers wouldn't notice. For instance, after the lesson I gave, one teacher said, "It was so hard for me to not answer their questions, but to turn it back to them." This is a woman who has been teaching 20 years and does an outstanding job, but she's now thinking a new way -- that she has to hold back and let the

students run with their intellects. To have another teacher in that same school who was similar in experience say "Know what I'm doing now? I'm doing small group work and everybody's assignment is not due the same minute." And after all these years he says, "That's a big deal for me."

As opposed to the teacher at another school who just says "Feed me. Give me something that I can do tomorrow." My challenge is to carefully provide materials that will also help that teacher to grow, but not to build a dependency. This is essential to our work. Teachers must become independent.

Vignette - Mr. S. Goodheit

Marvin is like the Missing Link. I mean, for years we have looked for that person who would take the world of academe and put it into the classroom. Not a lot of people can do it. I really respect him. He is aware of the most up-to-date research and programs and materials, and he knows where to get them, how to get them, and he'll get them for you. And he has the incredible knack of being able to relax you yet make you self-assessing about what you do. He sees learning as truly interactive whereby students and teachers are learning at the same time. And his key concept is, don't have the kids open their books, have them open their minds.

I truly believe that the future of education rests with a more active role for colleges and universities, and that it also rests upon involvement of the private sector. I think CMA is a step in the right direction to get money in the right places. Where things are working they need more resources. This runs counter to the usual assessment which is, if something's working let it rot so the rest of us don't look bad. We've really got to get out of that kind of thinking.

The Center for Minority Achievement is probably a misnomer for the essence of what CMA does. It's one of the second or third things. The first thing is staff development. The next thing is, they exemplify what Illich calls "the learning network," where every part of society has a part in the education of the kids. The future lies not with the city budget. It's going to depend on universities getting in there.

LG: This of course speaks to the meaning of the University-school collaboration because we came to see that our work becomes supportive of the whole body of literature that informs us that just as there are stages of development along the human life span, there are stages of professional development in teachers from beginning teachers to more experienced teachers and that is one of the things that informs our work as staff developers. To come to our work from this point of view that is based in theory but to be willing and able to go directly into the schools and to put theoretical views into practice, I think this is part of the power of this program coming out of a college setting.

LM: I think we're putting our finger on what true reform is, and the growth that we're seeing in people is growth that comes because we individualize our approach. Not only is our work individual to each school, but is individual within each school according to which teacher or group of teachers we are working with. That is what makes our work so effective. We know that you do things differently with a 20-year veteran from what you do with a beginning teacher. We don't expect the same things, nor the same pace of growth and acceptance. Since we come with that as the fundamental part of our mission, people respect us because we believe that every teacher is capable (unless the person is totally misplaced

professionally) of doing better. Most people want to be competent and to develop and grow professionally.

MC: I have to tell you that I work with somebody who, the first time I talked to him, really started out a maniacal tyrant, which made me wonder whether this teacher cared at all about children. After the second meeting it was totally clear to me that his behavior was totally defensive.

LM: Of course. Some staff are just like defensive children.

MC: He was afraid to admit his vulnerability, even though he had requested to work with me, that he was the reason he wasn't reaching children. He put up this incredible word barrage and shield. He said this is an impossible situation, we can't do blah blah blah. And yet, anything I suggested, the next day he tried it and felt good about the results.

LM: That's wonderful.

MC: But now, finally, there's a relationship and there is less of the smokescreen. There is a sense of trust. Most importantly, he is taking more responsibility for children's learning.

LM: But you see it is the same way with children. Children act defensively because they don't know and they don't want you to find out that they don't know, so they will be belligerent and act out. In the same way the teacher says "What are these college types doing here, what do they know?" In these situations we have to be the grownups who say to

ourselves, "All right, we expect this kind of behavior. If we are here, we stay and we persevere the way grownups do when they want to work with kids and ultimately we break those defense mechanisms. We say no matter where you are on that continuum of skills, we will help you. I think that makes a big difference. We've seen people who've been very, very belligerent over time break down and say "Help me. Show me. What would you do about this or that situation?" And the hard part of our work is that we, like good parents, are different for each kid, and we have to shift gears going from room to room and from school to school.

MC: We understand the ambivalence. A teacher who volunteered to work with me said dreadful things about kids, but he's not that way at all, I watched him teach. He's not that way at all. Again it's defensiveness.

LM: I think that comes back to something I believe very, very firmly, and I think I said it before, but I just want to make sure it's recorded, most people want to be competent. It's a rare person who will want to do something year after year and be shabby at it. We come at this from our philosophical base of "We are helpers and we will hang in until you understand why we're here and how we can help you."

One of the things that I've been doing that is part of the program that is working I think in small ways but gem-like ways has been the lunchtime seminars that are now going in three schools. They're very different in each school. In each school I stay for whatever the lunch periods are, and on the basis of what people say they need or want to know or talk about, we have professional conversations. These have been about teacher expectations, students' attitudes, motivation, teamwork,

classroom discipline, and adolescent behavior. The thing that I have been so pleased about is that teachers have said things like "I'm sorry it's only a lunchtime. When are you coming back? This was really good. It's good to hear my other colleagues say these kinds of things." I was pleased to hear these comments because they reconfirmed my belief in the basic desire of most teachers to be good. However, these lunchtime seminars made us know that time must be allotted in teachers' programs for frequent professional interchange and cross-fertilization.

MC: I think that's a very important part of it. Having colleagues hear colleagues. You have to know that you're not alone. But everyone thinks he/she is alone, because the culture of schools is so isolating. Teachers will proudly tell you, "I close the door and do my own thing." They don't know that there are half a dozen other like-minded people down the hall who care about kids in the same way and are closing their doors and doing it the right way, or doing pieces of it the right way. When and if they talk, everyone grows.

LG: So that all the things that are elements of good reform, addressing the school leader, addressing the culture of the instructional staff, and addressing the students themselves are components of the work we're doing. There's an article in the Fall 1988 Educational Administration Quarterly by Metz that speaks to the need for a third wave of reform. Metz argues that not until we begin to confront the issues that have to do with the actual culture of the people in the schools, and particularly the students themselves, will there be educational reform that addresses the schools that are in most need. We are going out to the schools that are in

most need, working directly with the people and not being afraid to go into the classrooms and to learn the hard lessons that have to do with helping these young people to have enough faith in schooling and in the culture of adulthood, to have the nerve to buy into education, to buy into setting goals, to buy into scheduling and planning their lives in a way that allows them to say yes to society, as opposed to saying no. We've got social issues here that increasingly become frightening and they're real ones. As educators we're constantly finding ourselves on the frontlines of student decision, of student choice, to either go with something that looks a bit more like planning and goal setting and faith in society, or to go the other way. The school is a place where we can help our youth make positive choices and I think our work is a start in the right direction. I want to speak a little bit longer. Metz in the same article quotes Ogbu, who back in the 70's wrote a report for Carnegie saying that students will not do well in school as long as there is a scarcity of models of educated people who are succeeding in life. Ogbu is still making those same kinds of connections. I think our Imagine Success Work Experience Program begins to address that particular critique perhaps in a direct manner. We're attempting to help students see the connections between the professional setting of the workplace and their school community. We're hiring you to come to Bank Street to work after school. Your salary is coming from a Stay in School program funded by the State. You are expected therefore to improve your school behavior, to become more responsible in terms of not only attendance but in terms of your behavior and your responsibility to your work within school. We're starting off small. We've had to have the painful experience of terminating the work experience for one of our students who wasn't able to adhere to those rules, but this is also part of

his learning. There's a certain responsibility to society, to professional places, and to school. We are making some direct input in terms of helping our students develop a sense of responsibility as students. Their teachers are buying into this also and are working with us.

LM: I think what you're saying is so really valid. What lots of schools and programs overlook is addressing the cultural enriching aspects of children's lives that should be incorporated into the curriculum. I think this is part of what we wrote in our Stay in School proposal: that there's an honoring of what the students are and who they are and what they bring to school, and that no kid is totally a deficit, and that no kid is a failure in every aspect of his or her life. No kid comes from a failed culture, and school has to recognize diverse cultures and incorporate them into curricula if they're going to rescue poor kids and kids who are at risk. They are at risk because they feel they are nothing and therefore have nothing to contribute. If the school keeps reinforcing that, then students opt not to come. When Marvin talked about alternatives, I was just reading something the other day that stated that dropping out is one of the alternatives children choose.

MC: I think that's an incredible idea.

LM: They've deliberately chosen to drop out and for them it's a positive choice.

MC: Right. I think back into my cultural frame of what were my acceptable choices when I was in high school and dropping out was not

even a choice. It was which college, or which profession are you going to choose.

LM: So what it means then is that school people have to understand that the kids are choosing dropping out as an option. Therefore, we have to have a menu of options that are so fascinating and relevant, not in corny ways, but in relevant ways so that children understand that school is the world, and that what we are learning is connected to life outside. We have to begin to train teachers not to teach in compartments but to talk to a next-door neighbor teacher and then loop that combined learning into the children's history, culture, past, into his community and into the wider community of the city and of the world because whether they drop out or they don't drop out, they're going to be citizens of the society, citizens who are either productive or non-productive. Our responsibility is to make them productive and to make whatever is happening in school interesting, relevant and part of their success in life. We don't do enough of that, and part of what we do when we talk to teachers in these seminars is to say, "You have to examine yourself and your teaching strategies and what your beliefs and attitudes are about the children in front of you, because if they ever catch from your beliefs, expectations, and behaviors that you think that they cannot do or that you believe that they are incapable, then they will not learn and they will be incapable."

MC: You said something that I'd like to broaden further, which is to talk about schools as culturally rich places.

MC: I'm thinking not only about the artists and the professionals that we've brought into schools who have made school culturally rich, who have valued the child's environment, but who have also addressed the teachers' needs to have school be a stimulating place for them that the teacher likes to come to. By making the school a culturally rich place, the children buy into the big ideas that we all share. One of those big ideas is that school is a good place to be with a lot to offer. For kids and for teachers, the richness has to include that they are capable of creating knowledge. That they are going to not only record the history of knowledge and learn all these things, but that they are going to come up with something new that they themselves make new knowledge. That's a very powerful thing. And that's what we're doing for teachers, letting them have the power to create new ideas so that the kids can say "Look at that. That teacher (standing up there) is excited about teaching and learning! This is interesting!"

LG: And it has been interesting. I am remembering watching Mr. Bartle at the Tiorati Teachers Workshop working with the mapping and the overview maps and then seeing that overview map integrated into the classroom experience the next week. And there has been a direct follow-up with the math workshops that he has been attending on Saturdays with you, Marvin, and your colleagues. We have been making a difference in his teaching and there is a quality of excitement now that the teaching is no longer some dull, rote repetitiveness, but rather his teaching is generating ideas and thinking.

LM: Hands-on Tiorati experience is profound for teachers, students, and Tiorati staff personnel.

Vignette - Ms. D. Metzler, Tiorati Staff Developer

Hopes

The program guidelines are demanding for the teachers. We support teachers who are willing to work together and who have a "shared" common class. They must be willing to meet for common planning sessions and be committed to providing experience-based investigations for students to concretize the "text-book learning." Typically, one of the teachers is in science, the other from social studies or language arts. In addition, the teachers attend a monthly, two-hour seminar with all the Junior High Program participants where we share common concerns and tackle problems in integrating curriculum.

My hope is that this program will provide a forum for the teachers within the school to talk to, and support, each other. I hope that through planning and actual Tiorati experiences with their students that they will see and/or confirm the value of experienced-based investigations which will be seen as necessary and not just "extra enrichment," especially for this age.

I hope that I can provide support for these teachers in dealing with their administration, to help make things happen for them and their students. I hope the planning meetings, successful trips and classroom work and seminar meetings with their colleagues from other schools provide affirmation to them in their teaching and stimulation to help stretch and expand their ideas of what is possible.

Who Was Involved?

There were four teachers involved from the same sub-school. They all volunteered for the program following a presentation by

the Tiorati staff at the school last spring. One teaches science and Spanish. Her partner in the program teaches social studies. Although they were initially told by the administration that they would be working with the 8th grade, their "shared" class was, in fact, the 6th grade. They expressed concern about taking kids to Tiorati without the homeroom teacher. After our initial meeting I offered to intervene with the administration to change the class to the 6th grade. With that encouragement, they went to the administration themselves and were given permission to work with the 6th grade, using Spanish and social studies. However, the teacher wondered whether "it would confuse the kids to be talking about this project (Tiorati) when they see me for language?" With the assurance that we could figure out some exciting investigations with Spanish in the experience, it was settled that we would use the 6th grade class with which they were most comfortable. The other two teachers work as a team, one teaching science/math and the other social studies/language arts, keeping the same children for all three years (6th-8th grades). They involved their 7th and 8th grade classes in Tiorati.

What I Did?

I met with the four teachers in a classroom over their common lunch period (which included the normal interruptions, long cafeteria lines, etc.) for planning meetings. The first meeting was devoted to the general format of the Tiorati Junior High Program, including the monthly seminars. I asked for a general overview of the curriculum covered through the year. This was also the meeting during which the 8th grade vs. 6th grade class controversy surfaced.

The focal point for the meetings was preparation for a trip to the Tiorati Workshop building, located in the Palisades Park, for each of the classes. Specific plans and schedules are made, but the process also starts the teachers thinking about/discussing cross-curricular links. Half of the meetings were attended by all four teachers. The other meetings were attended only by the team involved in a specific Tiorati Day.

In addition, there was further contact with the teachers and with their colleagues from other schools through the Seminars. The first was held on a Saturday in October at a natural site (Iona

Island) in the Park with which we wanted the teachers to become acquainted for future field experiences for their classes. The other two were Friday afternoons at Bank Street College. Release time for these seminars was arranged with the administration.

What Happened

The teachers decided to focus on "environmental influence on cultural development of early civilizations, i.e., Mayan Indians" for the specific Tiorati experiences for the 6th grade class. Relating directly to the topics being discussed in social studies and Spanish, there were three investigations planned for the morning: an archaeological "dig," digging natural clay for pottery, and grinding/cooking maize (corn). The class was divided into three groups, and each investigation was 1 1/2 hours. Each student was involved in only one morning investigation, so sharing their experiences with others in the class was important. After lunch we hiked as a group to a rock shelter which had been used by Native Americans in pre-Colonial times. Along the way, each small group focused on different needs for survival, like food, warmth, protection and shelter. The time at the Workshop was very short (only 3 1/2 hours), so we felt rushed at the end.

The archaeological "dig" began with a discussion of an archaeologist as a detective, scientist, historian and geologist. We had clipboards with grid paper ready for recording, and a sample of how it should be documented. A short demonstration of using a grid, trowels and sieves followed. The "site" had been set up the previous day, using old bones, broken tiles and a cup, an old spoon, stones, corn and other "artifacts." Even with general boundaries, the students had trouble finding the site at first. They all began "digging" furiously, without thinking or looking. When one student actually found the site, all care in "recording" their grid was lost. Some of the students could be convinced to go more slowly, but clearly it had become a major treasure hunt. When all the objects were found at last and spread on a table, the students were quite good at reasoning about implications of a particular artifact.

The clay group rode the bus to reach the streambed for the clay deposit. The small group discovered signs of erosion, soil layering, animal tracks, fossils and the clay. They collected a coffee can full, to be taken back for washing.

The students working with the maize found grinding to be hard work! They used a rounded stone pebble and a Foley mill, sifted it and made tortillas. As they worked, they used the Spanish vocabulary for the different objects and then started with songs to make the work go faster. They also compared their cornmeal to the purchased, processed variety.

The hike to the rock shelter only took about 45 minutes, but the time was filled with new sights in the deciduous forest that surrounds the Workshop. The students enjoyed being "children" by taking a "bath" in the oak leaves, climbing on the rocks, and showing great excitement (and quiet) when deer would appear. The sun came out with perfect timing to illustrate the value of a south-facing shelter.

The Impact

The most obvious impact was the Tiorati Day experience itself, which gave the students and teachers a concrete picture of the environmental resources in a natural setting and the hard work of survival for early peoples. One of the teachers was very animated in describing "an unexpected off-shoot" of the maize investigation. Some of the students had an opportunity to taste the tortillas on the return bus trip, but the remaining ones were put in the refrigerator at school. By the next day, however, they did not smell quite right to the teacher, and she decided not to let the students taste them. They were very surprised by how fast they had spoiled and they had an additional discussion on preservatives in our food today.

She also described the impact of the "fall-out" of the Tiorati experiences even on the other classes. The word is spreading in the whole school. She found much greater interest in Mayan myths about the god of maize than she had in the past, even among students who had not come to Tiorati. The follow-up projects with the clay will be carried out in collaboration with the industrial arts teacher, who has a kiln in the room. The archaeology experience even "helped prepare them for some of the questions on their mid-terms," according to the social studies teacher.

The other obvious impact of this program is the discussion and interaction among the four teachers in the school. I would guess

that the teachers interact socially, but I don't know how much time is devoted to "brainstorming" curriculum ideas with other teachers involved with the same grades. These two teachers seem "deferential" to the other team-teachers, but these common planning meetings at least give the opportunity of sharing common concerns and ideas.

Why Did It Happen

As staff developer, I can give the teachers encouragement and "permission" to follow their own good instincts. They seem to feel somewhat bound by the administrative bureaucracy and by the increased numbers of tests that are given ("where do they get these things?"). The experiences of the Tiorati Day and the follow-up give them permission to provide experienced-based learning for their students. They also receive affirmation from the other two teachers in their school, and evidently from additional teachers who are expressing great interest in the program (and perhaps envy). This is also affirming, and helps to justify the extra time and effort that goes into participating.

Other Comments

When asked for comments on their impressions of the Tiorati experiences, both teachers used the language found in curriculum manuals. "Archaeological Dig - Understood evidence gathering, organization and interpretation. Clay Gathering - Learned the importance of natural resources, and the practical implementation of those resources to meet their needs, i.e., using clay to make vessels. Corn Meal - Same accomplishments as clay group but with a sounder understanding of the importance of agriculture and agrarian societies in the development of modern man." ". . .my instructional objective was for them to see what hard work this [grinding corn] was and they really found out. They were complaining that their arms hurt and then they started singing to make the work go faster."

MC: But it has to get specific. I think the hardest thing in working in a school like Mr. Bartle's school is that it is not part of the whole school's culture that kids get excited about learning, that kids can create knowledge, that kids are really smart, alive and full of life. These are foreign ideas.

When I go in there, I put a simple series of numbers or activities on the board that lead to seeing patterns. The kids are not used to being asked to do that. That's thinking, and they're not used to being asked to think. I organize them into small groups, and they sit there and they wait for me to tell them the next thing to do. I say, "Why aren't you working?" And they say, "Well, what do you want us to do?" I say, "Why don't you know, we talked about it? It's up there, and you can talk to each other." They do not even talk to each other, because talking means getting into mischief. Talking about problems and solutions is not part of the big idea everywhere in that school. Once they realize what is acceptable, i.e., that you want them to think, they get involved.

LM: Well, I want to tell you Marvin, it's not part of the big idea in many schools. See, I've been thinking of what I call minds-on experiences. We always talk about hands-on experiences, and I think there's something called minds-on experience, and that's very exciting because kids can clue into hands-on experiences pretty fast, but minds-on, that's a different story.

MC: Very important, very important for adolescents, minds-on... The goals of formal operations.

LM: Yes, and I think we need to be up-front with that in terms of training our teachers. The point that you're making is well worth saying again and again. If the teachers cannot do it, they cannot translate it for children to do. Many teachers don't put minds-on their plans or their work. That's a really bad blanket statement, but what I'm saying is that their conception of teaching is just to lay out the material. This does not involve thinking about what the implication of the plan is for children. There is no thinking about how to make learning real and how to make all these wonderful flashes and leaps that make kids say, "This subject must be exciting because this person in front of the room is going crazy about it, and is asking me to think and will not let me go." And once the teacher will not let them go, thinking and learning take place. If we as trainers will not let them go, then the teachers translate that to the kids. If we say this is how you focus and let's try focusing, then we say "Then you do that same thing with kids." You can't push thinking in one area. You can't do it to the kids and not do it to the teachers. You can't do it to the teachers without doing it to the principals.

Vignette - Mr. S. Goodheit

Lorraine has the knowledge of the workings of the school system. She's a motivator. She's a facilitator. And she helps extrapolate ideas and transpose them into structures that can work. What did she and I do together? Oh, many, many things. What Lorraine is is the perfect combination of theoretician and pragmatist. You need both but you rarely get them in one person. Her philosophy stands for something that's completely important: she helps everyone see that he or she can be an agent of change. She looks you in the eye and says, "Don't say, the whole system

stinks so my school is going to stink. Be an agent of change!" And she lets us know that if you feel you can't make a difference, you won't make a difference and you will let your school stink.

MC: I agree. A very concrete example that I think every teacher can relate to is the "Do Now" that's on the board at the beginning of the class. When the kids come in or whenever they start a lesson, they've got to work on a "Do Now." This is the first thing they do. In mathematics it's traditionally four skill problems. The "Do Now" is a given in all the math classrooms I have visited. It is a good example of how to build thinking in children without challenging what teachers are comfortable with. The "Do Now" is usually a few problems on the board when kids arrive. The goals are practice, focus and order. It is the first thing the kids do. I think being able to talk to the teacher in terms that are not dramatically or threateningly different from what they're used to, and say to them, "Let's take your Do Now. If you want them to practice multiplication -- one digit times two digits -- instead of giving them four random problems, give them four problems that lead to a pattern. If the kids catch on by the third one, they have a shortcut for doing the fourth. They can predict results. They are thinking because they are expected to think."

LM: Have you tried that with any group?

MC: I've worked that now with two classes.

LM: And how is it working?

MC: Dramatically. I mean, the teachers can't believe it. And the teachers jump right into that because "Do Now" is their vocabulary. "Hey, I got a new kind of Do Now, and it's easy." "And all I have to do is put problems on the board like I've been doing for 15 years, but now I just have to think about the numbers a little more." They have to plan and be organized.

LM: It's very interesting because I had a conversation very similar to that with a lunchtime seminar group. They were talking about test preparation, and I said the real thing about test preparation is you don't have to go over exam after exam after exam. You have to teach kids how to have test savvy. You have to teach them test vocabulary. You have to say to them, "What does your mind do when you see a question like this? What is the question asking you to think about and do? Don't answer it. Just analyze it." And I said, "Give them tests on analyzing the questions, and get them away from 'I gotta get the right answer,' because once they get the concept of breaking it down and saying 'Oh, that's what they want and this is what I have to do,' they fly." Test preparation is not just about the answer. Of course, you want them to get the right answer, but once they understand, "Now, that question is asking me to do this, analyze that, change that, and seek, compare and contrast. And then I go back to the reading passage, for example, and say, What have I read or done that will help me get the right answer," their test scores improve. Teachers say, "Well, don't you think that's cheating and teaching to the test." I say, "No, that's not cheating." You should never prepare kids for examinations without teaching them exam language and answer analysis. The tests that you give all along during the term ought to look like the standardized test

items they're going to go bump against towards the end of the term. We want to avoid saying when results come in and students have failed, "But you know this material." And the students say "Yes, but we didn't know that's what they were asking us to do." We have to train teachers to train students to see patterns, analyze, and predict. That's part of what Stanley Kaplan's success is based on. Teachers were saying, "Ah, do you think it's wrong if I give them the questions that I want them to answer and say those are the very ones on the next test?" I say, "No, because tests are not about 'gotcha.' It's about giving kids competence so that they can pass tests."

LG: The competence is being expressed in terms of analytical exact thinking.

LM: Exactly.

MC: And in fact another thing that's been very popular with teachers is to tell them to give the kids the questions and the answers and then ask the kids to determine the structure or process used. Ask them to figure out, "How do you do the problem? Here's the question and here's the answer. How did we get it?" And the teacher says, "But you gave him the answer." "Yes, but I didn't tell him how to do it." What's your goal? Your goal is that they learn the algorithm which they need for the test, but also that they learn analytic skills that they can use on a new problem.

LM: I think your question is the crucial question of school. What is the goal? Is the goal to give tests so you can say, "Uh-huh, they didn't study. I

got them. Uh-huh, he's been talking and joking around in the back of the room, now's my chance." That's not the goal. The goal is to give kids analytical competencies and skills that can get them through schools' tests and life's tests.

LG: Yes, and underlying those skills, underlying those competencies, there are moral skills and social skills that enable the student to make right choices about their lives and about the context in which they're living as citizens.

MC: What are the things that have been working?

LG: Our experience with the values called Nguzo Saba was positive. Values used to be something that people could expect were begun in the home and reinforced in the institutions. I think that we're at a point where the values have to be thought of very consciously as a part of public education. The Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles that are celebrated by African-Americans at Kwanzaa in December, are seven very generic values that have to do with unity, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, faith, creativity, purpose and the like. These values are inspired by the African lifestyle and were formulated by a man in California, Dr. Maulana Karenga, in 1966. The Forces of Nature Dance Company that came to School Y performed a piece that was based on these seven values. Before the company came to perform, the 7th and the 8th graders were exposed to the values and introduced to some simple chants. The 7th graders really responded to the chants. The eighth graders were given an extensive writing assignment by their teacher, Mr. Bartle. They

wrote about each value and I read excerpts of their papers at the Forces of Nature performance. I was particularly pleased because Mr. Bartle had followed through specifically on something I had introduced. This idea of values is important to me and specifically these Kwanzaa values. The students had prior exposure to these values through community and commercial connections, so they're natural tools to help them to explore ideas of responsibility to oneself, to one's community, to one's school, and to the community of one's classmates.

LM: I think this fits into something Marvin and I have been talking about and what works well is that we give the kids lots of experiences. Experiences which are rich are fastened in students' brains when they are followed up by assemblies, trips, writing, speaking, and reading activities. This is really seminal to good teaching, and it doesn't happen enough. Where we see it happening in the program, it is wonderful. If we were going to write recommendations to people about how to really make things work, we would say that nothing should be one-shot, dropped in, disconnected, and especially not disconnected from the children's very lives but also not disconnected from other "basic skills," like reading, like writing, like computing, like thinking, and like working together.

MC: It makes me think back to the, I think it's the early 70's, when there was the whole values clarification movement in schools and, you know, it was faddish in a way, and I don't think we need it as another academic area, but I think we need it more than we needed it in the 70's. Teachers again need to know how to make it part of life, whether it's Kwanzaa or whether it's more generic.

LG: Whether they're selecting specific values...

MC: We have to help teachers think about presenting kids with value conflicts integrated into the curriculum or as a part of school life. For example, you see your best friend cheating on an exam. What do you do? How do you deal with it?

LG: When you're asking the clarification questions, there's some assumption that...

MC: That there are values. It's absolutely true. Many children need support in developing and maintaining these values. Most of all, they need adult role models.

LG: Of course there are always values but the values have to be brought to consciousness and reinforced.

LM: I think the operative words there are "brought to consciousness," because I was in a class today watching a teacher do a lesson about getting context clues from newspaper articles, and she had focused on a lottery article. Right next to the lottery article there was an article about Gorbachev and what's happening in terms of the disappearance of some Russian leaders and his ascendancy because of it. There was also another article on Black athletes, Nature vs. Nurture, and yet the choice was made for the lottery article, so teacher's choice carries value.

MC: By the teacher.

LM: By the teacher. The selection of any material indicates value judgment. So there is conscious choice of what values we are going to talk about and it made me think that even in talking about the lottery, she could have talked about the value of chance as opposed to preparation, chance as opposed to saving, chance as opposed to budgeting. The lesson made me think that there really is no lesson in which values cannot be spoken about if the teacher looks at the material thoughtfully. And that's part of teacher training that has to happen. I'm not for saying, "Stop, now we're going to talk about values." Any story that is read can relate to values. In work that is done in computation, and in any of the arts or sciences, there are values that teachers have to be trained to bring out consciously.

MC: There are unspoken values that the teachers are communicating. You know, I mean the hidden curriculum.

LG: Yes, we need to be aware of values in general and cultural enrichment. At the same time, I'm saying, let's teach the Nguzo Saba, the seven principles, particularly in the context of a school where most of the children are African-American, because these values relate to African history. Cultural pride is something that I think is lacking. So I see these particular values as a way to get at alot of other things. At the same time, I am hearing and understanding your point that if the teacher is not conscious and aware of standards and the power of standards in a holistic way, the seven principles can be taught as dry, dull, isolated things to memorize.

LM: Sure, sure, sure.

MC: You'll have a test on the 7 principles next week.

LM: I think what Marvin is saying too is something that is really profound in teaching because whether teachers are conscious of it or unconscious of it, they are teaching values by their very selection of material...

MC: By the style of teaching.

LM: Exactly. By what they say, by what they don't say.

LG: By on whom they call and on whom they don't.

MC: What is the message when the teacher calls on girls more than boys?

LM: Right, right.

MC: A wonderful anecdote happened in Bank Street College. A woman came from Asbury Park to visit the School for Children and a SIS school. Appropriately, she felt that children are valued in the School for Children. The specific incident that brought it home to her occurred when one of the teachers asked a question and half the class raised their hands to answer. The teacher said, "Oh, I only see half of you responding. Maybe I didn't ask the question the right way. Would one of you like to rephrase it so

that the others will better understand it." A child did and almost the entire class raised their hands. Understanding by all was the given value. Now listen to what she's doing. She's respecting them and their ability to communicate. She didn't say that they didn't know how. She did not allow a few raising their hands to legitimate the others' passivity or lack of knowledge.

LG: And in another context, the teachers would say to the class...

LM/MC: Half the class is pretty good. Bravo.

LG: We're looking for classrooms where each child is valued so that it is not acceptable to be in front of an entire classroom of students and teach 2 or 3 actively volunteering students.

LM: Teaching two or three kids, moving right along, covering the curriculum and not teaching kids is not acceptable.

MC: So how have we been successful at getting teachers to communicate values. In what ways do we do that already, and what do we have to do to start them working at this in their plans and work with children?

LM: I don't think we've done it consciously, i.e., consciously with each person. I think we've done some workshops where we've talked about the value of kids and the value of teaching and bringing everybody along and not covering curriculum. But I don't think we've spoken forthrightly and said, "This is what we're thinking about in terms of your being a person

who communicates values to kids," and maybe that's something that we ought to think about. I've talked about conscious teaching, but that's not quite the same as teaching values, and I'm not even sure we should get off on this particular point because that may be something on the agenda for next year. Values need to be part of conscious teaching.

LG: That's an interest of Mr. Bartle's. He has always picked up on the aspects of the the Imagine Success curriculum that focus on values. And really, when I came in a couple of weeks ago and said Mr. Bartle made me fire Johnny from the Imagine Success Work Experience program, our discussion really centered around values. Mr. Bartle was saying that Johnny needed to take responsibility for his actions.

MC: And this whole work-study experience is a real value lesson about responsibility.

LM: Yes, I think we should maybe explain that a little bit.

LG: It sure is. The Imagine Success Work Experience Program was designed with the idea that the young people perhaps would have a greater value of the academic experience in school if they could see the corollary relationship of what's happening in the workaday world. The people in the Bilingual Department agreed to monitor and to supervise 3 of our students in an afterschool Work Experience program. Of the 3 -- 2 young ladies and 1 young man -- the 1 young man was not able to sufficiently make the connection between school attendance and work, to be able to continue in the program. Still, as I mentioned, because of the

delay in the pay, when we got ready to pay these young people, one young eighth-grader was getting a check for $120.00, which is no small amount.

LG: We asked each of the students to write his/her budget, to answer the question, "What are you going to do with this money?" Shirley's first intentions were to buy a $54 pair of shoes, to put a gold cap on her tooth, and to buy a gold ring. After I talked to Shirley a bit, I then met privately with Candace, the supervisor. But here's another example of something that I think is so powerful -- peer counseling. The other student, Taisha, who comes from a family that's a bit more balanced, had made a balanced budget at the very beginning that described how much she was going to save and how much she was going to give to her mother and how much she would splurge on herself. By the time Candace and I came back to speak with Shirley again, we didn't have to! Obviously Taisha and Shirley had been talking, because now Shirley had written a much more reasonable budget. And each of them was able to stick to their budget as well. They came by the next week, showing off very attractive new outfits -- moderately priced! It was a wonderful lesson. This whole process took time though. Candace and I counseled for about two hours.

So many other issues came up through this process. There is an additional value to the work experience. When Taisha and Shirley first found that they were going to be the two that volunteered, neither of them was very happy because they "didn't like each other." Taisha even came to me and said, "Don't put me with her. I don't want to be with her. She treats me mean" and so forth and so on. I said to her that part of the work experience involves learning to work with a diverse group of people. You don't choose with whom you work.

LM: Is Candace a kid?

LG: Candace Rudolph in the Bilingual program was their supervisor. And she's very good, very powerful, a real counselor, an excellent supervisor and role model for them.

LM: That's great.

LG: Candace observed, but didn't do anything directly. She said that the two worked well together. When they came in last week to show off their new acquisitions, I noticed a closeness -- a friendship. That was very powerful for me.

Below is an essay that Taisha Smith wrote at the end of the work experience.

Taisha Smith's Work Experience Essay

"What Did I Learn"

I learned how to use certain supplies correctly such as the copy machine, typewriter, and computer programmer.

"What Did I Love About Bilingual"

I loved my boss Candace and how she taught me how to do those things. She was patient, kind and very considerate. I also love my top boss Ms. Lonnetta because she's all the above and more. She makes the day bright with her smile. She knows just how to make me feel better when I am down.

"Do I In Any Way Connect the Work Experience with School, or How Has It in Some Way Made My Attitude Towards School Change?

The work experience was kind of a guide to my work in school. It also helped my discipline towards coming to school everyday and on time, some of which are the requirements for the jobs. I also am connecting my work experience with my determination to keep on going and not to let anything deter me. I really like the fact that I had a chance to train for a job. Now I know that nothing can stop me.

"What Did I Benefit Period"

I like the advantages of working at Bank Street College. It was a real challenge for me. If I had to do it over again, I certainly would. I hope that next year at School B that someone else gets a chance to work at Bank Street College, and I'm sure they would feel the same way after a period of time.

MC: And I will tell you what a teacher said to me this morning. I went into her classroom to hand her a book. Number one, it was the first time it was quiet in her room. The kids were all cutting away. She was doing something manipulative with 27 kids, eighth graders, not even seventh graders. I mean, these are kids who have been accepted into high school already. They were puzzling around with these pieces of tangrams. And then she took me aside and said, "You can't believe how orderly they are." Then she said to me, "You know what's most amazing. The worst math kid is getting the hardest problems right." I said, "No, you're wrong. It's the kid who had the most trouble with arithmetic who is getting the geometry right" because that kid knows geometry. Geometry is a whole different mind-opening experience for the kids. They were working so hard.

She talked to me about homework -- "the kids don't do homework anymore." I said, "Well, what do you give them for homework? Twenty-five of the same?" She said, "No, ten." I said, "Well, how about asking them to toss coins tonight. Plan some probability lessons. Ask them to toss coins and keep track. Then you can do the lesson based on an experiment without the disorder of the experiment in class." And then I gave her a whole series of activities kids could do at home.

I saw her the next week. She said, "You know what? Everybody's doing their homework now." I said, "How come?" She said, "Well, you know, we're doing less practice." I said, "What are you doing?" She said, "Well, we're doing these activities." She was worried about running out of ideas. I said, "I'll help you find more ideas that tap into where they are, and it's got to be challenging."

I will say that my one failure in a model lesson this year occurred because the lesson was too easy. I was trying to model a lesson and I

didn't challenge the kids. The teacher tried to tell me it was because it was a beautiful day out, and it was this and it was that. Sorry. It was because the work was too easy for them. They had studied the topic the previous year. I had a wrong feel from the teacher about where they were. It was my fault. They are adolescents, they were antsy and it was a nice day out. So why listen to this guy who's saying something I learned last year? But to turn around the failure -- there is a need to learn to turn around the failure -- to say to yourself and the teacher, "That lesson didn't work. It wasn't because it was nice out. Let's diagnose it. Let's think together about what these kids do need and what will help them." And that's really, you know, the thing that we can help them do.

LM: I would like Lonnetta to talk a little about the turning around of Ms. Fogle who when we began talking about the Imagine Success program and how having children do "these loose things" got her hackles up.

MC: This is our WIT (Writing is Terrific) teacher.

LM: Yes, this is the one who's taken on additional work after school with no compensation.

LG: Yes, and there was some sense of resistance at the beginning. It was very difficult to make appointments and it was difficult to get the program started. Somehow we'd make an appointment, but it would be missed. Finally, I began to understand that as long as I presented Imagine Success as a program that only related to personal skills, without relating these skills to the reading and writing skills that were her primary concern

as an English teacher, the two of us were not going to connect. At the point where I was able to come in and bring a very simply but explicitly written description of the program, relating it to the improvement of reading, writing, and communication skills and a plan that involved the making of a videotape that would come from the children's writings themselves and that would build upon that, she became much more receptive to the Imagine Success program. She took these initial materials and translated them into very attractive posters on the wall which are still a part of her classroom. The next point at which we began to reach another level of coming together was through the Imagine Success basic breathe exercise, a quieting exercise. Quiet is a value, and she was able to see children come in a little bouncy and, through the exercise, find a way to shake out the bounciness in a fun way. This worked for her. Finally the active motivational chant, I think, impressed her. You can get children quiet but you cannot make them become involved and enthusiastic. She's a teacher who loves her children, and I think when she saw their enthusiasm in their eyes, she was impressed. As we've worked over the year, I have handed over my leading an exercise to her. At a certain point she said "I seem to be doing more and more of this." And she became more involved because she saw it work for the children in two ways, helping them to become excited and enthused but in a manner in which they were able to keep control.

MC: I think that from what you said I realize that the point at which she bought into your program sounds like the point at which she felt you valued her cultural postulates of school. "Quiet, reading and writing, communication -- that's school, and don't tell me about this chanting unless

you're going to let it be these given things." I guess it's sort of related to the "Do Now." The "Do Now" is almost a cultural postulate. It is the way an academic subject works.

LG: In a sense I see our work as building bridges between excellence in traditional education and excellence in progressive education. On neither side are we saying this is the only way; but we're saying that there are some good things that are happening on both sides. Our interest is the children, let's combine, let's merge the best in both and make something great happen for these young people.

MC: I want to go back to the value question. And I think it's worth spending a little time on because I think it's something very unique that we can focus on in the Center in terms of styles of teaching and things that we ask teachers to do. I think back to School C and asking them to start an Honor School that would honor all, a place that would make all children honor students. A no-fail system. It relates for me to cooperative learning and untracked teaching based on high expectations. I think about how Slavin's cooperative learning is sweeping the country now. We've got it. I have to tell you though that their cooperative learning isn't as cooperative as my version of it, because there's a competitiveness between the teams and an identification of weak and strong children. But there still is the idea that you must work together to help everybody in your group and that you are valued based on growth.

LM: You don't like that aspect?

MC: No, I like that, but sometimes the groups can get too competitive. Within the group there is certainly a positive team thing that goes on. The fact that one of the rules I suggest to teachers is that they tell the kids that they can't ask the teacher a question until they have all got the same question forces the students to turn to each other instead of to turn to the adult and forces the teacher to rethink her role. Another thing that is very much a part of the math is that children should be creators of knowledge.

LM: What does that mean, Marvin?

MC: It means that children are not involved in just the recording of history, i.e., the procedures that exist, in a discipline. Rather, they can create new ideas. And I think that's very empowering, and that's a value that they need.

LM: What do you mean by the expression, creating new ideas.

MC: Well, okay, if I teach kids the multiplication table by saying, "Memorize your 5's table, that's different from saying to them, "Here are these numbers -- 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30. What do you notice about these numbers?" "You add 5." "What else do you notice? Look for patterns. Thinking and your insight are valued here."

LM: Okay. So it's really thinking.

MC: Yes, it's thinking and expecting all children to think everyday, not just the top kids on special days. It's asking kids to think rather than just to record information. Some of the children are rarely asked to think and when requested to think they sit there confused until they are told what you want them to do and shown how to go about thinking.

LG: Something I'm wanting to know how to get across is the idea that thinking takes effort. How do you translate this idea? When you play basketball or when you're doing something with your body, you have to put an effort into it. Thinking is an effort also. There's a muscularity to thinking.

MC: You need to practice to get good at it. Thinking is also an active process. Demanding thinking helps fight intellectual passivity.

LG: Marvin, I like that idea -- we never got to explore it -- of charting progress in learning specific content. Talk a bit about that. I wish we could get some people to play with that.

MC: Well, it's just that. It's just giving them something to learn so that they can keep a record of their own progress. As a result you build self-esteem and the willingness to participate.

LG: For example, do you know the capitals of all 50 states? Usually it's a kind of rote kind of thing.

MC: Yes, and it's something that they're definitely going to be successful at, so then they start to value themselves. But I see that less as the creation of knowledge and more as just valuing yourself -- that you can gain control of your mind. Once you start to look for patterns to achieve the goal, or use "tricks," the self-esteem is focused on your ability as a thinker, not a recording device.

LG: Yes, valuing yourself and beginning to feel what it is to think, to mull over something, to work over something in your head, to make it stay there. You know, that whole thing about memory is something that I've always argued with people about.

LM: I'm for it.

LG: Right, I'm for it too.

MC: Yes, but you know, I heard it said really well about two weeks ago by the head of a school. He said of course the kids memorize, he said, but not before they have experienced that which they will memorize. He said he was an English teacher. He would have kids memorize Shakespeare, but not until they had read it, not until they had dramatized it, not until they had discussed it, and then they would go off and memorize something that had meaning to them. Something that will always be part of them.

LM: Yes, I agree with that in part. I think that there are some things that you just need to put in your head and have there to use whenever needed. I think memory is wonderful, there are... who was, was it you,

Lonnetta, who was saying you went to this occasion where there was a 79-year-old woman who got up and recited a poem that she'd learned in elementary school. The woman was blind, so it wasn't as if she'd read it yesterday.

LG: Right. This was at our family reunion.

LM: Right, and there are other things like it. There are these nuggets that kids ought to have in their heads that get them through hard times. I want to mention something about that muscularity to thinking; I like that expression alot, because I've come up with the expression that means "Minds On." They said, "Kids have to have hands-on experience." And I said, "It's just as exciting to put your mind on something and burn through a problem, because that's something very exciting that happens in your head, and you say Oo-o-o! I got it!" This is active involvement.

Vignette - Ms. Lincoln

What We Did

Throughout the year, before and after the lesson that's the subject of this vignette, I met with Marvin and discussed curriculum. We talked about manipulatives. He made a lot of suggestions about how to integrate problem solving into the curriculum. We talked about ways to structure the curriculum so if you use a problem solving approach, skills will come with it.

He helped in finding materials and in figuring out what you could use if you didn't have, say, Cuisenaire rods on hand. Actually, he asked if I had Cuisenaire rods and I remembered that I had seen

some way deep down in the basement, so we went down to the basement together. When I wanted to use calculators and couldn't think of a way to get some, he thought of asking the career center. He suggested some ways to use them. Some of the students' skills are terribly poor, the actual adding and dividing is very difficult for them. So by giving them calculators we gave them a chance to actually solve problems. After doing a lesson and having them struggle on their own to solve the problem, we'd give them the calculators to go quickly through the problems.

The ideas weren't new to me, but just talking them through, having their support, was very important. Could I say he was a mentor? He was somebody to talk to. I have a million ideas, but sometimes it's not easy to get them done here. I gave Marvin examples of lessons that didn't work and we talked about how they would've worked better. Sometimes it's not easy to come up with the right way to use manipulatives, for instance, or graph paper.

What Happened

I did a lesson on estimating and averaging, without telling the children that's what they were doing. To begin, I had a box filled with ping pong balls which I passed around to the class. They traced the box on their papers and then drew the number of balls that would fit inside right on their papers.

The idea was to start with something big, a thing they could hold and conceptualize. Then I held up a big box of raisins -- something you can't count -- and asked them what they could do to determine how many raisins were in the box. They had various ways they thought they could do it. I suggested they count the ones on top. Then they figured out that they could measure the box and come up with an estimate. I then gave each student his own small box of raisins and, working in groups, they were asked to estimate the number in the boxes before opening them up. Part of the lesson was about recordkeeping so I had them write everything down. Then they opened the boxes, counted the ones on top and, based on the size of the boxes, made estimates.

O.K., this is where they had to start thinking for themselves. They were allowed to take the raisins out, count them, and see how close their estimates were. Then they charted the number they

found in each box. Then each person had to do something -- give some away, take some -- so that each member of the group had the same number of raisins.

The next day I brought in more boxes, this time of a different size. The idea was to systematically repeat what they'd done the day before. They worked in groups. Then we produced written group reports. And then I discussed averaging with them. I didn't give them any labels to what we'd done until that point.

The Impact

There were a lot of ooh's and ah's when I introduced the label, averaging, to them. See, these kids need to have the experience before the lesson. That's what I learned. It builds self-confidence. Also, working in a group -- that was one of our first small group sessions. The most important thing I got was that everyone learned something from it. Not everyone learned averaging. But everyone learned that there are different ways of coming up with a solution. And that lesson they're still using. I see it when we multiply and divide: when they're stuck they look for other ways of solving the problem.

MC: Right, but what Lonnetta's talking about with the muscularity is what I think kids and maybe teachers, too many teachers, think is automatic. It's not and it's not enough. Memory is too often the value that permeates the curriculum -- not thinking.

LM: No, it isn't. It involves practice.

MC: It is and it is not. It's practice, and it's learning how. It's somebody helping you think about how to think which is very appropriate for adolescents.

LM: Right. I like the expression "muscularity" because it means working at something...

MC: That's right.

LM: ...but it's also the connections. See, part of what I've been trying to drum around when we say what works is to talk to teachers about non-isolated teaching. Kids learn something 45 minutes in this box and then go to the next box and learn something else totally unrelated and never is there any link or what I call "The Lightbulb Connection." That's muscularity, because that's what causes students to think, "Oh, that's what she meant when she was talking about the causes of the Civil War," or "That's why the slaves..." or "That's why the Emancipation..." or "That's why the War of 1812..." or "That's why the Boston Tea Party..." Because if you want to talk about taxes or war or labor movements or civil rights, you have multiple connections that are fascinating and relevant to kids.

MC: I mentioned earlier my worst lesson of the year. The teacher was feeling bad, and I said, "No, no, look at what we learned." I said "This was a bust because it was too easy for these kids." Learning doesn't happen unless the work is hard, otherwise why should the kids pay attention. If the work is too easy, kids say "Why not talk to my neighbor? Why not fool around? I saw this in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. It's easy. I can just be sloppy about it and maybe I'll get it right and maybe I'll get it wrong. But, you know, who cares?"

LG: It's the challenge that's interesting. Right.

MC: I also have been thinking about when teachers will be ready to change, because we engage teachers for a long time and we're about change. And that's hard. Alot of teachers are saying that they are willing to change, but they don't know how to change. They want to see somebody else doing something different. They want to see alternate models, they want to know they can try and fail and not get written up for it, and they want to know that it's safe. They want to know that their class isn't going to fall apart, especially when an outsider is present. They want to know that the kids aren't going to be jumping off the walls.

There's a need, not only to provide a safe environment for the kids so they can learn, but there must be a safe environment for the teacher to learn, grow and try change. And just as with the kids, they want to know that they can succeed.

Vignette - Ms. G. Dayson

The Impact

Something was awakened in the children: I see a little more curiosity; I don't see them as being as rigid as before. They had been afraid to try something new. In fact, I had a couple of students who didn't want to go at all. I made them go and, of course, they had a wonderful time. On this kind of trip they have the freedom to move around. They get to run, and to talk loudly if they want.

As for me, I'm positive now that this is the way I want to teach from now on. I've been converted to the Bank Street way of doing things. I never felt the children could have these freedoms and follow through. But they do follow through, as long as they see it as something that's important to the group.

It gave us a chance to work together, a chance to keep our "family" that we get going in the 6th grade together. That's the strength of our program. We're able to give them experiences they wouldn't get otherwise. We're able to give them confidence and to try to keep their confidence going because of the continuity. It really works. They connect not just with the teacher. They connect with each other. This is such a hard age --hard to make friends.

I've become a little freer. Not just through Tiorati, through Marvin, as well. He came up with some great ideas. And they worked. And the kids learned! And they had fun learning. And they came back for more.
About myself I learned that I know a lot more than I thought I did. It really made me feel good. I am not a science person. I don't even care for it. And I loved every single minute of it! So I can put myself in the place of students who may not enjoy science or do well in class and see how it feels and how they may relate it to other stuff.

I still have the ability to grow. It's never too late!

LM: Exactly. I agree. It's interesting you should say that because today I saw one of the teachers that I helped two years ago, Mr. Devon.

MC: Oh, I remember Devon.

LM: Yes, and what worked with him was being with him and him alone over time. After he learned to trust me I sat in his room time after time. I think we have to understand that what works is that the same person work with people over time so that trust is built up and there is not a feeling that you are not going to be reporting to the principal what you see, or that you're connected to the rating officer, but really, that you have

come in a helping capacity. You come as a person who's done it, so you're not one of these college types who hasn't ever done it.

MC: And willing to do it.

LM: Right. And willing to listen, because part of what happened is I would ask him about what I saw and heard. Things were going to wrack and ruin in his room.

MC: I remember. That's the science teacher.

LM: Yes. And I'd say to him, "What do you think is wrong?" And he said to me he would be a better teacher if he knew the children's backgrounds, the homes from which they came and whether their mothers were working and their sisters were on the street, and I asked him how would that help him to get the children to sit down. And he said he didn't know. And I said I didn't know either, and we started to laugh about his answer. There were really bread and butter teaching issues such as classroom management techniques, lesson planning, variety in pace, multiple teaching techniques... that he needed to have addressed. To make a long story short, maybe we should make it longer, I saw him today in the elevator looking relaxed and self-possessed. The first year he used to look wound up and disheveled.

MC: I remember him with his shirt hanging out of his pants.

LM: Right, all disheveled. But today he was looking casual and relaxed and this was after lunchtime when most people are thinking, "Please, let this afternoon fly by quickly." I said, "How's it going?" And he said "Great! You see, I'm here for a third year, right?" I felt good because most people who are in the condition he was would not have remained. It was getting his trust and then it was pointing out those things that first would allow him to manage the class, and then, secondly, teaching him how to plan and how to pace and move the lesson. Those were vital things that enabled this man to stay.

MC: I think what you're saying is that you built a relationship...

LM: Right.

MC: ...that you then built a long-term relationship.

LM: Right.

MC: And I think a part of that relationship that becomes real important, when I do it with teachers, is the follow-up.

LM: Yup.

MC: I say, "Did you try it yet?" A little bit of nudging sometimes, but a little bit of "Let's talk about it." And you can hear, you know, read between the lines after a little bit, about what they really did when they say they did certain things, and you have to pin them down and find out

what their words mean. And really follow through with them. Let them go try it, then come back, and be low-key, and say, "Do you want to see me teach the lesson or do you want to see somebody else do it? Can I get you to look at another teacher?" But it is long-term, and we know that this is at least a three-year process.

LM: It is. For some people change having to do with order, curriculum, and seeing relationships happens more quickly. At the end of that first year, I said to that science teacher, "This first year was hard, but come September and all this stuff you learned is going to be under you belt, and you're just going to start sailing along immediately." He looked at me in total disbelief. And yet, that September, his administrator said to me about him, "I don't believe it. This is not the Devon of old. I don't believe the change."

I think that proves that if things are interesting and if they're well thought out, and they're challenging, kids will respond. It can't be the same old, same old. Kids will respond to challenging, interesting work because they have plenty of leisure time to do schoolwork. They have time to look at television for hours. We're not talking about homeless kids whose situations may be very, very different. We're talking about the ordinary kid who comes to school has plenty of time. Teachers could sit alone and in groups, and say, "Let's think of imaginative, crazy kinds of homework," because by extension, if you can do that, then you start doing imaginative things in the classroom. I'm sure this teacher has now begun doing different things in the classroom.

MC: Absolutely, because it all feeds into the classroom.

LM: Exactly. You're not going to give an imaginative homework assignment, and go back to doing the same old same classwork.

MC: But what a great homework assignment lets the teacher do is do the part that frightened her. She has them do that at home. You know, the stuff that might get out of hand.

LM: Right. Okay.

MC: They do the cutting at home, and stuff like that. I think one of the things that led to her being ready to change was that she had almost a sense of desperation. She needed help, and she needed somebody to put new things within reach. I also think that this all would be facilitated if there were some different kinds of departmental structures in the school because teachers are too isolated.

LM: Yes. I think you're putting your finger on another aspect of what works. From everything that we've been going around seeing, a great deal of success can happen in schools with kids if there's a pervasiveness of purpose, a pervasiveness of teacher training, and teachers getting together. There have to be times in the programs for staff meetings that could be used to do the kinds of things we're talking about. When we go in and do these one-shot staff development meetings, they're wonderful, but if staff development became fabric of the school, so that whenever there's a staff meeting, it is a staff development meeting at which some aspect of teaching and learning, and some strategies are going to be shared that makes almost another spirit in the school. But if administration says it's

about kids, and then when teachers go to meetings it's about things, that is duplicitous and dichotomous and staff says school is not real here. If everywhere in the school the ethos and feeling are How do we make it better for kids, How do we make it better for ourselves, and How do the kids become better for themselves, then there is no split between rhetoric and practice.

MC: It's a value.

LM: Exactly. So we try a little bit, but it really is up to school leadership to continue staff development.

MC: I think another important question is what are realistic expectations for change from a teacher? How far do you think you can take a given teacher, or a group of teachers? I think of School B; now we've been working there this year with some intensity, we've been there before, but this year with intensity, and we're each doing systematic things, but, at least for me, it would have worked better if I had clearer goals for a specific group and more consistency of personnel. But I would like to see clearer goals and a focus on a grade level. Of course, I think that the people should be involved in setting the goals. The teachers should help set the goals, with a little nudging if they're not being realistic or aggressive enough about what is possible for themselves.

LM: Well, I think we do that in part. There is only so much you can do as outside helpers, but I think the way that we fashion it, sitting down with each of the principals or superintendents at the end of the year, and

saying "What would you like to have happen next year with Bank Street as a presence?" is one way we've begun to do good things. They say, "I'd like some math staff development. We'd like some model lessons." So that happens.

MC: But what I'm saying is then, okay, you want math staff development. What's your vision? Ask the teachers the same questions. Ask the teachers to set goals for themselves. Then ask them to plan specific activities as well.

LM: Exactly. Exactly. But when you say you're going to do math staff development, that's broad enough to encompass both.

MC: But how much change is enough for Teacher X?

LM: I think it's individual. It's according to where that teacher is. If it's like the science teacher in the other school, clearly the goal is to establish order and to create a pleasant and neat learning environment. His room looked like a junkshop. It looked like an ill-kept storage closet. But the next thing after that was to begin to say, "How do you plan for learning?" For people who are well on down the road, it may be what you did with Jean and those people, and that is, how can you let go of some of the reins and allow the children to have more experiences? For this guy, it's how to get control of the reins, so that he can establish himself as teacher in the room. It's meeting each of them where he/she is. You think of Jean who is already an accomplished disciplinarian, and an accomplished teacher. It was a matter of getting her connected to the Tiorati Environmental Center,

so that not only would she learn some new kind of things, but also that the kids got these great learning experiences and trips. I think it's very individual. I think to set a goal with everybody, the goal should be that everybody is going to improve.

MC: Everybody's going to improve, and there's a common vision of what school should be.

LM: I agree.

MC: And I think one of the things we need to do at the May 12 CMA/SIS Staff Retreat at Tarrytown is for people to say out loud their vision of what can be in their schools, and to plan for the vision to happen.

Quotes from Participants at May 12, 1989,
SIS/CMA Staff Retreat Held at Tarrytown Conference Center

"What was the value for you of this retreat?"

"It helped me to look at myself differently. I realize that I still do have a passion for what I'm doing and what I have to offer."

"To get an opportunity to meet with my colleagues and do some serious planning for next year."

"Know that you're not working in isolation."

"(1) This was a great opportunity to meet away from our physical working plant. (2) Allowed brainstorming. (3) Intervention with other educators with similar problems. (4) Listening to other ideas and suggestions as to how to correct."

"Getting away from the school setting in an informal setting allowed us to communicate better with each other to share insights and explore possibilities."

"I began to realize why progress takes change. Many people see things differently. In order to effectuate change, common ground must be found. Personally I'd rather have 5 concrete thorough items/plans rather than 50 concepts."

"It provided an opportunity for sharing that is necessary to provide continual growth. The suggestion made by different schools were beneficial to everyone. Sharing is what it is all about."

"I have heard new ideas that may help us in our program next September, such as getting students involved in positive attitudes about themselves and about their school."

"What actions will you take as as result of this retreat?"

"I will try to interact more frequently with my colleagues on an informal level so that we can share information about how we are working with the students, what's successful,what's not, where we can cross disciplines, etc."

"I will take more time to pre-plan for my class. I will also refer to my colleagues more in order to benefit the students."

"I will begin to develop written proposals that I've considered through my experiences, to bring to our next colleague planning session (which will hopefully begin prior to September)."

"I feel that change will be the action I will take."

"Implement curriculum change to attack test-taking techniques for students and teachers -- upgrade expectations of school with respect to algebra, geometry to 8th graders/7th graders -- science high school entrance exams."

"I will continue to meet in my planning committee."

"We will try to spread our enthusiasm to the rest of the staff with the hopes of extending expectations from the administration, staff and students."

"I plan to work much harder to improve the program in my school that already exists. If I can't make an impact on the entire school I plan to start on a small level and forge ahead."
"Will have planning meetings in June for following Sept./Oct. so our Tiorati days can start earlier; got an opportunity to meet Malvice Boyle from school who may be interested in joining program."

"Setting up some planning time for my staff."

"I will try to interact more frequently on my colleagues on an informal level so that we can share information about how we are working with the students; what's successful; what's not; where we can cross disciplines, etc."

"I will work on putting together the information packet for Sept. '89."

"I will begin to develop written proposals that I've considered through my experiences to bring to our next colleague planning session (which will hopefully begin prior to September)."

"Larger planning group to plan in June. Focus on 7th grade and bringing students and parents together. Common prep to affect change in this area. Small group intense orientation."

"June planning for September's work -- meet with staff and parents. Focus on two goals for the school year: (1) improve attendance, (2) improve parent participation. Disseminating the information to the staff."

"We plan to establish mechanisms that will assure a continuous flow of communications between our minischools."

"I feel I should get more involved in these types of activities where so many experiences are shared. I intend to put in practice some of the ideas heard here today."

"I look forward to begin working on September's schedule in May."

"Your Comments"

"Thank you!"

"This was a great sharing experience."

"Excellent!"

"We need more of these retreats, more sharing of information and, yes, even directives if necessary."

"I really enjoyed the environment in which the conference took place and the provisions which were supplied."

"Helped us focus on a different way to move things forward. Exchange of ideas in a 'friendly, calm and professional atmosphere' produces growth across the board."

"This can be the Planning Committee. Help us."

"This was a wonderful opportunity to share my aspirations and goals with my colleagues."

"I am very glad I was a part of this conference here today. I am leaving this place feeling richer and more enthusiastic about finding new ways to transform children's lives."

CMA STAFF VIGNETTES

Dr. Marvin Cohen

The Setting

School A is a school of 1,200 students in central Harlem. It's divided into ten sub-schools, with each school specializing in a different area of the arts. The population is about 99% minority. Just about everybody is eligible for the hot-lunch program -- an indication of the economic circumstances of the kids. The sub-school that participates in the Center for Minority Achievement (CMA) is named Students and Teachers are Raising Standards (STARS). It began with children who were lateral transfers, that is, children that no one else in the district wanted. These were kids who were too old for 6th grade and not skilled enough for 7th. Teachers in the STARS sub-school run a summer reading program for their students before their first full year and do amazing things with them.

The STARS staff is exceptionally strong. These are very fine, traditional teachers. School A has shown flexibility on bureaucratic matters. For instance, two STARS teachers (one of whom is the subject of this vignette) are able to stay with kids for three years, from sixth grade when the students enter, through eighth grade when they leave. This is very important. The two teachers feel that on September 1st they can start right in with the curriculum for their 7th and 8th graders; they don't have to spend weeks or more figuring out who's who. Also, class periods at School A are 55 minutes long, which is a wonderful thing! It allows greater instructional flexibility.

My Hopes

My work described in this vignette was with a woman who teaches math and social studies. She is a truly wonderful teacher, a master. She gives 500%, routinely doing things after school without compensation, maintaining close contact with each student's home. She's wonderful in a traditional way. My hope was to get her thinking of kids more as creators of knowledge and less as recorders of knowledge. I wanted to see her do less "telling" in her classroom. Also, I hoped to get kids to work in small groups, and to help her understand a different role for the teacher in that situation.

Who Was Involved?

Jean has been teaching for about 20 years. Though she's not licensed in math, she has 20 credits of math. She's savvy about the system. And she's very demanding of children. There's no such thing as one half the class not turning in homework. Everyone does it. Within two weeks of the beginning of school, kids are working to her high standards. High expectations and excellence rule her teaching.

What I Did

Jean, another teacher, and I met regularly to talk math. (He's teaching math, Jean's teaching 7th.) They would agree, in their own words, with whatever I had to say: "Small groups." "Yeah!" "Too much computation." "Yeah!" But I didn't get the sense that they were using these ideas in their classrooms. Jean didn't use groups for academic purposes, for instance, only for lower level activities such as checking homework.

We three got along very well. We hatched a grand plan for bringing the two classes together, but scheduling became impossible. Then, they both ordered math materials. Still I didn't see any of the material finding its way into the classroom. We kept talking and meeting but, again, there was no sign that anything we talked about was getting into practice. I'd talk about an approach I like, and they'd both say, "Yeah, I do that!" But I didn't see it.

Finally, we decided to get groups going in their respective classrooms. I made a time to come into the rooms and demonstrate how I work with small groups. We knew from the outset that it would be more than a one-time-thing. I didn't want to do a dog-and-pony show. We agreed to choose a topic together. Order of operations became our first topic; Jean said they could use the review. As it turned out, we worked on two topics in Jean's class, over four or five weeks, with me visiting once a week.

What Happened

On my first visit I gave the children a problem to work on: "Make the numbers one through ten using exactly four fours and any mathematical operation." This got us talking about operations. We did the number one together so they could see what I meant by the problem and then I invited them to find another solution to the number one as well as solutions to the numbers two through ten.

Then I said, "We'll break into groups with three rules:

1) You must help anybody that asks for help

2) You cannot ask the teacher for help unless everyone agrees on the question.

3) You are responsible for your own work."

The students were sitting in a traditional arrangement. We reorganized into groups of four. The kids were randomly and heterogeneously grouped. I said, "O.K. Now you can work on it."

The first thing that always happens is kids raise their hands and ask questions. My response always is, "Did you ask the other kids?" Usually the group can straighten it out. For instance, they'll ask, "Is this right?" I'll say, "Did you check with the group?" I make them aware that if the answer checked out with the group there is no need to ask the teacher.

Very quickly the kids in Jean's room really got to work. People don't think high-risk 7th graders can do this stuff. Not so! They came up with wonderful things. Kids who saw ways of doing the problem with the numbers 12 through 28, and with minus three, were raising their hands! Kids were creating more problems, more follow-up activities. They came up with harder problems for themselves to solve. They were working as mathematicians.

Jean watched, and walked around. She had a strong impulse to answer questions for them. More than once I had to interrupt with, "Excuse me, let's see if they can get the answer," or "Did they ask the group yet?" It made me wonder if I was getting through to her. But I could also see that she was impressed with her students, especially those she felt were less capable but who were coming up with interesting questions and solutions.

Needless to say, we ran out of time. We put successful answers and alternative answers on the board. At that point, we got involved in a

discussion about creating negative numbers. Children were asked to complete the problem that had led to the discussion for homework.

In subsequent days and weeks, Jean followed up. It became part of her classroom activity with kids, which is to say she legitimized it. She validated group work and problem solving as work for kids. Teachers tend to do problem-solving mathematics in their extra time; they don't check it and make a fuss over it, they don't do the things that validate it as work for kids.

The Impact

One day Jean took me completely by surprise when she wrote, in answer to a questionnaire we had distributed, that a success of the year was learning the value of not intervening. She also wrote about how hard this had been, and still is, to do. We hadn't talked this over; this is the issue she abstracted from our work together. It surprised me because I still saw her as a "teller." I hadn't expected her to articulate this insight as quickly as she did.

She has since done more organized group work and more problem-solving. She reports feeling frustrated because she can't fit the problems in with the curriculum -- she feels pushed by the curriculum. Still, she does find time. She presents kids with problems and asks them to figure out definitions. She's started doing work with calculators in groups.

Reasons for the Impact

Jean picked up the ideas I was proposing to her right away and there are many reasons for this. For one thing, she's already thinking along the right lines, despite her tendency to be a "teller." I saw this in our

discussion about math. One day we were talking about geometry and she said, "I don't teach area and perimeter; I teach circles and squares." In other words, even though her style is traditional, she's not tied to a skills-oriented approach.

In addition, she's an open-minded person and a lively learner herself. When she can get her hands on journals she reads the current research and theory. She's eager to watch other teachers, to see what's working in other classrooms. She herself comments that she learns from observation, and I think seeing me demonstrate my approach was a powerful moment.

Comments

There's a real lack of entry points for new information to get into the system. On the simplest level, there's no way for teacher B to learn that teacher A is doing something wonderful. The school bureaucracy could provide the arena for that kind of conversation, but it doesn't. In the case of this school, the department chair is not an educational leader and department meetings (a potential forum for real discussion) tend to be taken up with talk about the textbook, talk about upcoming standardized tests. The culture of the school views teaching as telling. This cultural frame defines the options teachers see, and the organization of the school does not provide a way to broaden it. CMA provides this opportunity.

Thoughts for Next Year

Jean has indicated that next year she'd like to work on integrating problem-solving into her curriculum.

Dr. Lonnetta Gaines

The Setting

School A was founded about 13 years ago as an intermediate school for the performing arts in upper Harlem. It occupies the bottom three floors of a large apartment complex. For its first decade, the school had a principal of vision and power. I saw him in action (in an earlier association I had with the school). There are several sub-schools within the school. We worked with teachers in the STARS (Students and Teachers are Raising Standards) sub-school which has a program that helps students get a better sense of themselves by providing an intimate, almost family-like environment.

The teachers are committed: they regularly put in extra hours after school; they go out of their way to enrich the curriculum by doing things like taking their children on trips outside the school. The teachers have a departmental structure that fosters collegiality and conversation among teachers. Two of the teachers, including the teacher I worked with, had taught children in a community setting during the summer. Coincidentally, they had learned to utilize movement and quieting exercises similar to the ones I would be teaching children. So, in a sense, preparation for what I hoped to do had already begun.

Hopes

Imagine Success is about learning to learn. It helps provide the personal skills people need in order to succeed -- skills associated with self-esteem. Academic success cannot be achieved by focusing only on curriculum. Even a focus on the study skills which underlie academic work

cannot lead to school success for young people if attention is not also paid to the ability to find quietude, for instance, or to set goals and schedule time. I hoped to work on those skills while working on a videotape with the students in a sixth grade class.

I hoped that my input would be energizing and inspirational, and that it would model processes involved in stimulating children to experience their own creativity. I also hoped to demonstrate the power of thematic approaches that integrate the teaching of basic skills and the development of self-esteem.

There's a gap between the qualitative and quantitative approaches to learning. Bank Street places its emphasis on process. Traditional teachers often want to see a product, a test score, for example, to be certain children actually are acquiring content. I saw the possibility of bridging that gap through collaboratively working with a teacher in the classroom.

Who Was Involved?

I worked with one sixth grade teacher and her students. She is a dedicated professional who's got a storehouse of vitality, commitment and intelligence. She views herself as a powerful, dramatic presence in the classroom. And she is! She exudes good will and humor. At the same time, she sets high standards and expects her students to really work.

When I first came in with Imagine Success she thought I'd just be doing breathing and quieting exercises which was okay with her, as long as it didn't take time away from the teaching of basic skills. I sensed a bit of resistance. I needed to come up with language and an approach that she would accept. I thought it would be helpful to relate Imagine Success to

the acquisition of reading. So I developed a short (two-page) statement of goals.

Meeting with resistance can be positive, because it challenges you to develop the right responses, to translate your ideals into an accessible format. Once I was able to present the program in terms that were meaningful to her, she responded wholeheartedly. She took the brief statement of goals I drew up and created big, beautiful posters for her classroom so that when I walked in and saw them there it made me feel so welcome. Right away I was in love!

What I Did

First I came in with Lorraine and Marvin and met with the assistant principal who said, "You know, we already have a video department." So I met with the video teacher who is very straitlaced and traditional. I had to negotiate carefully with him since we were coming in from the outside to make a video. (The video teacher, as it turned out, had no desire to do a project with that particular class. He found them unwieldy. Interesting, because with their English teacher, the woman featured in this vignette, they were almost angelically well-behaved!)

After the initial meetings with the teacher, I worked in the classroom every other week, 8:30 Monday mornings. First, I introduced chanting and breathing exercises. We had a class meeting in which we asked the students to imagine what they would need to do to be successful students. During the meeting we also explained the goal of the project to them -- to make a video. At the next session we introduced metaphors: what advice would you give to another person to be a successful student? They wrote letters to imaginary students at a school where behavior was a real

problem. I highlighted portions of their letters and put them together to form the narrative portion of the script for our videotape. The teacher and I worked on the format together. By this time we were of the same mind. We really enjoyed working together.

We went on some field trips. One was to Aaron Davis Hall at City College which has a series of international performances. They saw a performance and wrote about it. We helped the students make the connection between the performances on the stage and their own video performance.

Once a month I had a conference with the teacher. She and I developed our relationship around the context of the classroom.

At certain points, Jeff Hall, the video person at Bank Street College, would come in and tape. Our script came from the actual writing that the students had done earlier. The students worked on articulation and delivery of their parts. We had a culminating experience at the end of the first semester: a video party with food and juice. We committed ourselves to coming back to it in February.

In the intervening weeks something really started to happen. The teacher assigned the students the task of memorizing their parts, and she started using some class time for rehearsals when I wasn't there. Things were happening.

What Happened

We made the Imagine Success videotape.

The teacher changed from being somewhat skeptical to becoming quite involved. I remember the first time she heard the chant. She saw engagement on the faces of the students. She began to see value in her

program. The children looked so proud. She said, "I can see doing this every day."

In one meeting, I gave the teacher a speech that had been delivered by Jesse Jackson's teen-aged son at the 1988 Democratic National Convention. She was inspired by it and started an after school writing program called WIT -- Writing Is Terrific. She said that the enthusiasm generated by Imagine Success motivated her as a professional to begin this after-school program. She's working on her own time with about 20 students from 6th and 7th grade. I think this is so wonderful!

My tendency is to work with the whole group, to teach everyone. Hers is to choose the star. For the writing program she selected her best students; she's doing it her way. We're not coming in and insisting she do it our way. Rehearsing for our video, she would focus on the individual who needed help. I demonstrated how, if the whole class said the part together, the individual would emerge stronger at the end. I think she liked that.

Imagine Success had a positive effect on the class, as well. One teacher (the video teacher) who'd assured me the class was difficult to work with was so surprised coming into the classroom one day to see them so focused and involved. Another teacher, who teaches the class math, reported that the class had really come together in a way he hadn't seen before. He said that the usual name-calling and exclusiveness had dropped away.

The Impact

What happened in a larger sense is that there was a raising of respect for the progressive and the traditional ways of doing things.

You had professionals coming together in a school that had a history of respect, excellence, quality. And support people such as Lorraine, Jeff, and support services -- services and people.

Observing and making a product -- these were crucial elements. Looking at children as children, loving them, and enhancing self-esteem through skills; providing products that let them see their own improvement. Performance is product-oriented. They can see that at the beginning of the year they were mumbling and shy. The cassette and video tapes that we used helped them to see their improvement. These instruments, of course, supported the process of improvement.

The primary impact of the project was on self-esteem and group cohesiveness. In addition, the students improved their speaking abilities, and practiced their writing skills.

Reasons for the Impact

The teacher and I "clicked." Once we got started, we worked so well together -- actually team teaching with a group of 6th graders. Jeff, the video teacher, was a quiet and effective presence as well. And the fact that we were creating something -- cassettes and video tapes -- helped to maintain the enthusiasm of the students.

Having goals was important. It was also important to extend our work beyond the classroom. The Aaron Davis International Series was walking distance away and provided a wonderful source for cultural field trips.

The most important element was working with the teacher. We made a very good whole. Both of us are very energetic -- almost performers in the classroom. Imagine Success is based on the idea that the

skills of the performing artists can be translated into the pedagogical world. I am looking forward to continuing to work with this skillful and enthusiastic teacher next year. I think that we can do GREAT things together!

Dr. Lorraine Monroe -- #1

The Setting

School C is a school in the middle of the highly gentrified Upper West Side of Manhattan (gentrified people don't send their kids to the school; it is entirely black and Hispanic).

The principal invited us into the school hoping we could help her attract middle class kids. Her idea was to begin an honors school. We were there as a prime resource for the group of teachers she had selected to plan the program.

Hopes

My hopes centered on changing the minds of some people about the capacity of school to reach kids. I was hoping to change attitudes about black and Hispanic students' ability to perform. I was hoping especially to change teacher behavior. I also hoped to assist the principal by fulfilling her request.

What We Did

We sat with the group the principal had selected, every Tuesday, for a year. The principal allowed a double period for our meetings. We (Marvin Cohen, Nona Weekes, and I) and the teachers talked through what the honors school would mean in terms of curriculum, rules, parent involvement. We really wrestled with some members of the faculty who didn't believe the children in their school could be challenged. Yet, in spite of teachers grumbling about "these kids, these kids," we had enough faculty to make a go of it.

During our meetings we answered questions about nuts and bolts things like how to do long-range and short-range planning, how to quiet a class. We did a whole lot of work on interdisciplinary teaching -- math and social studies, for instance, and French and social studies. It wasn't easy for them but they found it fun. We talked about the value of assemblies; about giving kids incentives and rewards; about setting high expectations for kids.

People need kvetch time, and we allowed it knowing that you can't get to the real work until people get extraneous stuff off their chests.

We had special meetings with the parents' association, with district people, and with the principal. We had teachers come over to Bank Street to look at the math resource room, the School for Children.

Who Was Involved

The honors school group was composed of a teacher from each of the major disciplines. They were seasoned veterans, and some were quite good. One woman who didn't say much during our meetings was a very effective teacher. She may have resented having to sit through meetings.

Another teacher, who began to vocalize strong opposition to the meetings, turned out to be someone who didn't know her subject. She was a great disciplinarian. She regularly failed kids in large numbers because she couldn't answer their questions. The teacher thought she was extremely expert; she convinced the principal she could walk on water. Another teacher confessed to us that she never planned more than a week ahead.

Among the teachers was a superb French teacher. He emerged as intelligent, caring, and pro-kid. To the principal's credit, when she spun

another project off the honors school she made him co-ordinator of the new unit. Last year I was a mentor for him, conducting one on one advisement. He's now getting his Ph.D. in order to become an administrator, which is great because he has the right stuff to become a fine school leader. This year CMA was able to give teachers incentive grants. He used a grant to buy a button-making machine (it makes decorative buttons from photographs) so that he and 40 students could raise money to go on a school trip he had planned, to Montreal.

The Impact

The honors school got off the ground. It's composed of 7th, 8th and 9th graders who have a proven potential in reading and math. Out of the first class, one kid was accepted at a private school and four got into the special high schools. The principal was so pleased with it that she started a special 7th grade program called Project Success. (Some teachers in that program were not as dedicated or as skilled as the teachers in the honors school, so I don't think it was as successful as the honors school.)

The teachers involved were changed, not just in the way they teach their honor kids, either. They're able to see potential in their other kids and began to teach them differently. They have a lot more expectations for what you ask of all kids.

Two of the five teachers we worked with are now in doctoral programs at Teachers College.

The principal found out where the strengths were in her staff. She showed up at most meetings. It was very enlightening for her to do that. She got a clearer picture of her staff. She has now worked with staff to

restructure the entire school into subschools based on many of the concepts we developed three years ago.

Reasons for the Impact

Being there, steadily, all the time, was very important. We almost became faculty. We were not intruders, not researchers, but helpers. The union chapter chair was never friendly, but he didn't throw a monkey wrench into our work. We learned to always go into the schools by invitation. Our philosophy is "We're here to help you," rather than, "We're a college that knows a lot more than you do." Even if we see 16 gross things, if you see a 17th, we'll help you with the 17th, to gain your trust.

Some Things We Learned

You can't have a pervasive impact on a school unless you have a powerful principal, someone who's highly respected and demands excellence from his/her teachers. Also, it's hard to change a school in a year or two.

I learned about myself that I am still a learner. I'm gaining strengths all the time. I learned to curb my impatience; I can mask it better. I've reconfirmed that I'm a people-person. It's been the work of my life. People know that I don't have another agenda.

Comments

Teachers want to be good, they want to be competent. It's a rare person that wants to come to school to be awful. But teachers and principals do put up defenses, like kids do, to divert your attention from their weaknesses or incompetencies.

Dr. Lorraine Monroe -- #2

The Setting

School D is located at the bottom of Manhattan on the lower East Side. It's a junior high school with grades 7, 8 and 9. The students are principally Hispanic. Our program there consists of a series of lunch-time seminars. The principal is a seasoned veteran with a seasoned staff. There's a bubbly, alive quality in the building. There is a special kind of noise, not the noise of disorder. The staff is mostly white with some non-white faculty. The staff is pretty dedicated -- they want for the kids. The principal has been there for a long while; so have the assistant principals. There's a good stability. The administrators work well together.

Dr. Nona Weekes and I had gone to the superintendent of the district and had asked him where he wanted Bank Street to be. The superintendent wanted the disparate programs pulled together. It went against our ideas to go into a school and say, "We're here from the superintendent's office and this is what the superintendent thinks you need." Instead, I sat with the principal, spoke to him, and he said, "We need staff development." So I did workshops. I asked if he'd agree to lunch-time seminars. He gave me a room, and announced to the staff that I'd be there to talk about whatever people wanted to talk about.

Hopes

I hoped people would show up and open up and trust that this was a conversation among professionals about common concerns and, even, about common joys. You can't always do deficit workshops. People get a real kick out of talking what works and being reminded of what works. I

hoped people would come to recognize that there are fine things in the history of running schools that we have to come back to. I wanted to create a situation where people would continue sharing and talking even when I was not there.

What We Did

We started out with a survey of staff concerns gotten in department conferences which I attended. Then we fashioned workshops. People expressed concerns about classroom management, about how to motivate "these kids," about how "different these teenagers are from the way we were."

What Happened

We didn't know if people would come to the seminars but they did come. There were times when we had 12 or 16 people. They came from across departments. Some were not teachers; sometimes paraprofessionals came.

At one of our last sessions, we talked about whether it is better to cover curriculum or to teach deeply and thoroughly so kids leave class knowing something. Another time we did a whole session on taking trips.

My agenda is not to cover ground but to get them thinking. I want them to be changed people. I want them to examine how they themselves were taught. You have to make them confront the idea of "otherness" and difference and to think about times in school and in life when they felt different or like "the other".

We met six times a semester. My role was to begin the conversations, keep them moving so that long personal anecdotes did not

dominate, and to help them draw conclusions. I generally gave feedback sheets summing up what was said or concluded during the previous session.

A common thread running through all of our sessions was the feeling, "Isn't this wonderful to be able to sit and talk like professionals." Often people wished we had more time and reluctantly left some sessions while talking animatedly to each other.

The Impact

People came back time after time. They gave up lunch or brought their lunches. They apologized if they couldn't come. The older teachers reported getting "juiced up" from the seminars. They continued talking in the hallway. I feel really, really good about this. The fact that people say to me that it's wonderful to sit and talk to other teachers and to me makes me know that these opportunities are needed in every school. It's not enough to have a single day in the spring and fall for staff development.

I am capable of talking to anybody! These experiences have helped me to grow because I came to know what's profound in teaching. I love to talk about the art and craft of teaching. Most teachers want to be good. Many need opportunities to learn from each other. This both infuriates me and excites me.

One outgrowth of these seminars is that two other principals in CMA asked for them the next year. At the end of our first year at School D, the superintendent stated that he was pleased with the work we had done with the staff and pleased with the increase in student achievement.

Who Was Involved?

Dr. Nona Weekes is the head of the Educational Leadership Program at Bank Street College. She's one of the first people to have argued for Bank Street's presence in the city's intermediate schools. She's very supportive of our program, and very knowledgeable about what to do. She's done this kind of thing herself. She came to one school weekly for one year and actively participated in the seminars that brought about honor subschools.

CONCLUSION

We hope that you have enjoyed this slim volume that describes the work that we are doing to transform the lives of some children, teachers, and administrators in the six schools in which we are working.

We encourage you to use any or all of the techniques and methods which we have discussed.

All the best in this worthy work.

Marvin Cohen
Lonnetta Gaines
Lorraine Monroe

APPENDIX A

What Works in CMA

What we learned in CMA about effective education for early adolescents:

1. Systemic change in a school happens over time with the support of the superintendent and principal
2. School leaders need training in the following:
   a. formation of a vision of the school, the articulation of the vision, and the ways in which to disseminate the vision and keep it ever-present in the minds of the staff, students and parents
   b. planning, selecting the best plan of action, selecting and obtaining the staff and resources to carry out the plan, and the methods of following up on implementation of the plan
3. Teachers need on-site training in classroom management, lesson planning skills, lesson pacing and final summaries to ascertain learnings
4. Teachers need to develop, with other colleagues both inside and outside of the school, a variety of ways to teach using the abilities that the children bring to school
5. Teachers need model demonstration lessons and educational and inspirational videos to help them improve their skills
6. Teachers and administrators need retreats and other occasions away from the school which provide opportunities to plan and to interchange ideas with colleagues

7. Early adolescents need well-planned trips, selected speakers, and cultural events to increase their life and career options, confidence, and their self-esteem
8. Teachers need to plan to incorporate in the curriculum over the year the histories, literatures, and contributions to society of the ethnic and racial groups represented by the adolescents in the school and in the community
9. Early adolescents are different physically, socially and emotionally from elementary and senior high school students and teachers need specific training about these differences and how to use the differences to teach adolescents effectively
10. Teachers need to plan lessons, units, and projects that legitimize the following early adolescents' needs: to succeed at something, to move around, to be a vital contributing member of the school and the community, to talk with each other, to compete against each other, to be independent and dependent, to understand themselves and their immediate world, and to figure out where they belong in their "distant" future
11. Colleges and universities can work effectively and well in public schools provided:

    a. that neither party thinks it has the lock on "the truth" or "the right way"

    b. that the work to be done in the schools during each year is discussed and agreed on by all involved in the work

    c. that the purpose of the work always remains the transformation of children's lives.

APPENDIX B

A Brief Catalogue of CMA's Services and Activities

Student Achievement

1. Two eighth-grade classes began a "Great Books" program. Meetings with Bank Street College staff and the teachers and principal were held to choose books. Subsequent meetings were held to discuss plans for teaching the excerpts from great books incorporating reading, writing, and discussion. In order to enrich the readings, trips to places in the city were planned. Students were encouraged to read unabridged great books.
2. Math Clubs have been formed in two schools.
3. Sixteen students went twice a week to Columbia University to be tutored and were taken on cultural enrichment trips by Columbia and Barnard students. This was brokered by the Stay in School Project Bank Street College staff with Alpha Phi Alpha, a Black fraternity. Bank Street College staff gave and sponsored tutoring skills lessons for the Columbia/Barnard tutors.
4. Four classes were part of Bank Street College's Tiorati Environmental Learning Program which included interdisciplinary learning at the school and two field trips to the Tiorati Environmental Center near Bear Mountain, New York.
5. Several classes at one school used trips as an integral part of their curriculum.

6. The Stay in School Project Bank Street College staff brokered a tutoring program for twenty students at one school in which twenty Time, Inc. executives tutored the students at Time, Inc. headquarters. Once a week the students were picked up, taken to Time, Inc., given snacks, tutored, and returned to school.

7. Peer tutoring took place before school each day.

8. Students wrote and produced a video on building self-enhancement.

9. A Computer Club for students met once a week at the College's Center for Children and Technology.

Teacher Empowerment

1. Principals and assistant principals were coached and mentored in effective administrative behaviors and strategies in individual sessions at schools and at Bank Street College.

2. Eight teachers were coached in effective, innovative math teaching methods.

3. Five teachers visited the College's Math Resource Room.

4. Two teachers attended Saturday morning math programs at Bank Street College.

5. Several math teachers planned and worked together.

6. Teachers whose classes were involved in the Tiorati Environmental Learning Program attended seminars at the College.

7. Teacher Incentive Grant Applications were mailed out. Grants up to $200.00 per teacher were awarded, not to exceed $2,000 per school.

8. A Math Resource Room for teachers started to take shape.

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9. Math demonstration lessons followed by discussion of technique were given.

10. The Imagine Success program involved individual workshops with teachers about improving teaching strategies to foster student achievement and self-esteem.

Student Self-Esteem and Cultural Awareness

1. Imagine Success is a skills-oriented approach to enhancing students' self-esteem, cultural awareness, and self-discipline through writing exercises, trips, stories, lectures, videotapes and visual experiences.

2. Trips to see and hear cultural events at City College's Aaron Davis Hall were arranged.

3. Minority speakers (male and female) were engaged to speak about their lives and work.

Parental Involvement

1. A computer teacher volunteered (for per session fees) to stay two hours a week after school to teach parents word processing skills. Childcare was provided.

2. A survey was developed by Bank Street College and an administrator and distributed to parents. The results were used to plan different kinds of Parent Association meetings which helped parents develop parenting

skills, cope with New York City's human services bureaucracies, and acquire educational skills and credentials for themselves.

The efforts undertaken to promote the cooperation of administrators and teachers from the participating public school buildings included the following:

1. Meetings in the schools in early September with
   - -- Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent
   - -- Principals
   - -- Teachers involved in the Stay in School project.

   The purposes of the meetings were to assess the schools ds and to define Bank Street's role in meeting their needs to improve the academic achievement of their students, to increase students' self-esteem through our special Imagine Success Program and various cultural trips and speakers, to increase the professional competencies of school staff, and to increase parental presence and involvement in their school.
2. Workshops and seminars with individual teachers and administrators and groups on topics related to improving instruction, e.g., classroom management, effective lesson planning, testing, and innovative math instruction.
3. Meetings with individual teachers and administrators at the College for coaching/mentoring sessions, visits to Bank Street's Math Resource Center, the use of Bank Street's graphic computer experts to print material for schools.

4. Two formal luncheons where ideas, techniques, plans and dreams and mid-year and end-of-year program assessments were freely shared. The year-end sharing became the formative research for the following year's work as schools freely adapted successful programs to their school population.

5. Ongoing informal luncheons and meetings at the school and at Bank Street as needed.